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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6350

October 6, 2005

**VIA FACSIMILE
ORIGINAL BY U.S. MAIL**

R. David Paulison
Acting Under Secretary
Emergency Preparedness and Response/FEMA
Department of Homeland Security
500 C Street, SW, Suite 8228
Washington, DC 20472

The Honorable Hector V. Barreto
Administrator
U.S. Small Business Administration
409 Third Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20416

Dear David and Hector:

As the Chair and member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, we are writing regarding the upcoming application deadlines for Federal disaster assistance in the areas devastated by Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. We urge you to extend the deadline of October 28, 2005 for Hurricane Katrina and the deadline of November 23, 2005 for Hurricane Rita to ensure that the appropriate Federal resources continue to remain available.

The fact is that small businesses are in desperate need of assistance and face extraordinary reconstruction and rebuilding challenges. It is essential that we use every resource available to help the region not only recover, but prosper again. That is why, we recently introduced the Small Business Hurricane Relief and Reconstruction Act of 2005 (S.1807), which, among other things, would extend the deadline for applying for Federal disaster loans until one year after the President designates the applicants' county or parish as a disaster area as a result of Hurricane Katrina or Hurricane Rita.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Small Business Administration (SBA) are at the forefront of the Hurricane relief efforts in the Gulf region. Over the next year, FEMA and the SBA will play an essential role in the rebuilding of local economies and communities. The Administration's Federal Disaster programs are critical for rebuilding homes and businesses, providing employment for the hundreds of thousands who have been temporarily displaced, and redeveloping the devastated communities.

We look forward to working with you to provide assistance to the Hurricane victims. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me, or Wes Coulam, Staff Director of the Committee, at (202) 224-5175

Sincerely,



OLYMPIA J. SNOWE



DAVID VITTER